

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

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INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 1892

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

FROM LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV RH US UK

SUBJ: RHODEISA: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NKOMO AND MUGABE

1. SUBSTANTIVE DIFFERENCES OF APPROACH TO AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING HAVE ARISEN BETWEEN NKOMO AND MUGABE WHICH MAY BE WORTH NOTING. THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT IT WAS NOT UNTIL THE LAST COMMUNIQUE-DRAFTING SESSION WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT IN DAR THAT THEY BEGAN DESCRIBING THE ALL-PARTY MEETING AS A CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE. GRAHAM AND I NOW BELIEVE THAT THIS IS ESSENTIALLY MUGABE'S POSITION WHICH NKOMO ACCEPTED BUT DOES NOT FULLY BELIEVE IN. AS A MATTER OF FACT, NKOMO HAS SPECIFICALLY AGREED TO ALL-PARTY DISCUSSIONS AT THE CARVER LEVEL OF MILITARY

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AND ASSOCIATED ARRANGEMENTS. GRAHAM PROPOSED IN LUSAKA PARALLEL LOWER LEVEL DISCUSSIONS ON CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS. NKOMO REFUSED TO GIVE US AN ANSWER, SAYING HE COULD NOT SPEAK FOR THE PF ON THIS. MUGABE ON THE OTHER HAND IN MAPUTO AGAIN INSISTED THAT THE ALL-PARTIES MEETING IS TO DEAL WITH CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS. HE INSISTS ON THE FURTHER POINT THAT THE PF HAS NOT AGREED TO ENTER INTO DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WITH SMITH. THE

ALL-PARTIES MEETING WILL BE WITH THE BRITISH WHO MAY BRING WITH THEM ANYONE THEY WISH, AMERICANS, SMITH AND SMITH'S ALLIES, BUT THE PF'S NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE WITH THE BRITISH WHO MAY CONSULT WITHIN THEIR DELEGATION, NKOMO ACCEPTS THIS LINE BUT DOES NOT MAKE SUCH A POINT OF IT.

2. MUGABE CONTENDS THAT MILITARY AND RELATED SUBJECTS WERE DISCUSSED AT DAR AND SHOULD NOT BE RAISED AT THE ALL-PARTIES MEETING. HE REFUSED TO ACCEPT GRAHAM'S AND MY STATEMENT THAT WE WERE SOME DISTANCE FROM AGREEMENT AT DAR SO THAT THE MATTER NEEDS FURTHER DISCUSSION WHICH EVENTUALLY MUST INCLUDE SMITH ALTHOUGH HE DID CONCEDED THAT FURTHER MEETINGS ON SUBSTANCE BY THE UK/US AND PF ON DAR MATTERS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO HIM.

3. AT THE MOMENT, THEREFORE, NKOMO AND MUGABE DIFFER IN SUBSTANCE ON THE NEXT MEETING AS FOLLOWS:

A) NKOMO ACCEPTS LORD CARVER LEVEL ALL-PARTY MEETINGS ON MILITARY AND RELATED SUBJECTS. MUGABE DOES NOT.

B) MUGABE ACCEPTS FURTHER SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION WITH UK/US (WITHOUT SMITH) ON MILITARY AND ASSOCIATED SUBJECTS. NKOMO DOES NOT.

C) MUGABE INSISTS THE ALL-PARTIES MEETING IS ON CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS. NKOMO HAS IMPLICITLY ACCEPTED THAT TRANSITIONAL
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MATTERS BE INCLUDED. MUGABE HAS NOT REFUSED TO DISCUSS THEM BUT HAS COME VERY CLOSE TO IT.

D) MUGABE MAKES MORE OF A POINT OF INSISTING THAT THE RHODESIANS BE INCLUDED IN THE BRITISH DELEGATION THAN NKOMO. HE SPECIFICALLY REJECTS THE CONCEPT OF THE UK/US AS MEDIATORS. HE MAY MAKE AN ISSUE OF THIS POINT AT THE CONFERENCE. WE ARE LESS INCLINED TO THINK THAT NKOMO WOULD.

4. COMMENT: THESE DIFFERENCES OF VIEW PROBABLY REFLECT LARGELY A LACK OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN NKOMO AND MUGABE. MOST OF THEIR MEETINGS ON THE SUBJECT OF NEGOTIATION HAVE TAKEN PLACE DURING CONFERENCES WITH US AND THEY HAVE NOT SEEN EACH OTHER LATELY AT ALL.

5. NEVERTHELESS ONE SENSES SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN THEM. MUGABE'S STRENGTH ON THE GROUND IN RHODESIA APPEARS TO HAVE INCREASED. THE SUPPORT HE IS GETTING INSIDE THE COUNTRY, INCLUDING FROM DEFECTORS FROM MUZOREWA, SEEMS TO BE EFFECTIVE AND HIS POLITICAL ORGANIZATION IS GROWING. FURTHERMORE, INTERNAL DISSENSION APPEARS TO HAVE LESSENED FOLLOWING THE ARREST OF THE HAMDZIRIPI GROUP AND THE UNITY OF MUZENDA, TONGOGARA AND TEKERE

APPEARS TO BE STRENGTHENED. ON THE OTHER HAND, NKOMO IS PROBABLY BEING PRESSED BY CHINAMANO TO ADOPT MORE REASONABLE POSITIONS. HE IS CLEARLY BEING ACTIVELY WOODED BY MORE MODERATE ELEMENTS INSIDE RHODESIA AND BY THE WHITE POPULATION THERE. HE HAS BEEN LESS SUCCESSFUL IN DEMONSTRATING MILITARY STRENGTH INSIDE RHODESIA LARGELY AS THE RESULT OF THE PHYSICAL OBSTACLE OF THE ZAMBEZI BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF INTERNAL DISSENSION. FINALLY, NKOMO CANNOT HELP BUT BE DISCOMFITED BY THE RECENT REORGANIZATION IN THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT WITH THE DEMOTION OF GREY ZULU WHO WAS CLEARLY SUPPORTED BY THE SOVIETS AND PROMOTION OF MAINZA CHONA AND DANIEL LISULU. CHONA HAS NEVER BEEN A STRONG FOLLOWER OF NKOMO. NOT TOO LONG AGO HE WAS PUBLICLY SUPPORTING MUZOREWA. THE STRENGTHENING OF THE PRAGMATIC ELEMENTS WITHIN THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE INCREASING

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ATTENTION BEING GIVEN TO REPAIRING ITS ECONOMIC WEAKNESSES CANNOT HELP BUT LEAVE NKOMO WITH SOME CONCERN ABOUT THE STABILITY OF HIS ZAMBIAN BASE.

6. I WOULD NOT BE INCLINED TO CARRY THIS ANALYSIS TOO FAR. IT CERTAINLY SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN TO PRESAGE A ZANU/ZAPU SPLIT. IT MAY HOWEVER INDICATE SOMEWHAT MORE COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE FROM NKOMO TOWARDS AN ALL-PARTY MEETING AS DISTINGUISHED FROM MUGABE. AS I WILL REPORT LATER FROM PRETORIA, HOWEVER, EVEN NKOMO MAY BE TAKING A STIFFER ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE MEETING. THEIR DIFFERENCES COULD RESULT IN STRAINS BETWEEN THE TWO AT SUCH A CONFERENCE WHERE MUGABE COULD FIND HIMSELF SOMEWHAT ISOLATED IN SPITE OF HIS CONFIDENCE.

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